DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 279 346 IR 051 818

AUTHOR Barnett, Lynn
TITLE Indexing and Retrieval in ERIC: The 20th Year.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE [86]
CONTRACT 400-86-0017
NOTE 12p.; This paper appears in the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, 11th Edition--1987.
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050) -- Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Databases; *Indexing; *Information Retrieval; Search Strategies; *Subject Index Terms; *Thesauri
IDENTIFIERS *Bibliographic Data Bases; Current Index to Journals in Education; *ERIC; Resources in Education

ABSTRACT

This brief review of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system is intended to make users more aware of (1) the system as a whole, (2) the process of indexing educational literature for the database, and (3) the role of the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors in the overall information dissemination process. An overview of the ERIC system is provided, and a discussion of ERIC vocabulary maintenance includes descriptions of the 1977 Vocabulary Improvement Project (VIP) and the Vocabulary Review Group. In addition, information retrieval methods and tools for manual and computer searching are considered; and a discussion of ERIC's indexing provides general guidelines as well as detailed discussions of educational and age level descriptors, identifiers, and publication types. Further hints for relevant retrieval consider non-subject access and the target audience. Also included in the text are a listing of ERIC's searchable fields and vendors' field access labels; sample Resources in Education (RIE) and Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE) entries; listings of mandatory educational and age level descriptors, publication/document types, and descriptors corresponding to publication type categories; and a guide for assigning pubtype codes. (KM)

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INDEXING AND RETRIEVAL IN ERIC: THE 20TH YEAR

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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by Lynn Barnett
Assistant Director
ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education
The George Washington University

INTRODUCTION

This 11th edition of the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* is significant because it coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the ERIC database. Both ERIC and the *Thesaurus* have come a long way since 1966, from a fledgling project within the federal government to an information system known and accessed worldwide. ERIC has grown from a database of 3,000 items to one of 600,000 references. Its *Thesaurus*, which began with 2,300 core terms (compiled by "free indexing" 1,700 documents on teaching the disadvantaged), is now recognized as the definitive vocabulary of education and a model for other databases.

THE ERIC SYSTEM

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system established in 1966 by the federal government to provide ready access to educational literature by and for educational practitioners and scholars.[1] It is funded today by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education. ERIC collects and disseminates virtually all types of print materials, mostly unpublished, that deal with education—for example, program descriptions and evaluations, research reports and surveys, curriculum and teaching guides, instructional materials, and resource materials.

Central ERIC at OERI establishes policy and oversees the operation of the ERIC system. Centers of educational expertise at universities and professional associations operate the 16 decentralized ERIC Clearinghouses.[2] These Clearinghouses identify, acquire, and process educational information in specific subject areas such as elementary, secondary, and higher education, educational management, social studies, languages and linguistics, and rural and urban education. Support organizations perform other technical services for the ERIC system. Among these services are maintenance of central computer tape files, reproduction of noncopyrighted literature, and development of specialized publications, such as this *Thesaurus*.

ERIC acquires and announces the availability of educational literature (e.g., journal articles, research reports, conference papers, bibliographies, innovative practice reports). The literature is cataloged, abstracted, and then indexed using key words from the controlled vocabulary—the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*. Abstracted citations for nonjournal literature appear each month in a bibliographic journal, *Resources in Education (RIE)*. Annotated references to journal articles are found in the companion monthly publication *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*. With the help of the *Thesaurus*, all materials processed by ERIC can be identified by manual searches of the printed indexes in *RIE* and *CIJE* or by computer searches of the ERIC tapes. ERIC provides convenient access to the actual text of nearly 270,000 documents at over 700 libraries and resource centers that subscribe to and maintain ERIC microfiche collections of most documents cited in *RIE* (see footnote 5, p. xii).

Important components of ERIC are its subject-area Clearinghouses. Responsible for locating, acquiring, and selecting literature in its respective area of education, each Clearinghouse indexes that material using the terms from the *Thesaurus*. Thus each Clearinghouse has a stake in the content of the *Thesaurus* and contributes regularly to updating of the ERIC vocabulary.

[1]See Delmer J. Trester's *ERIC—The First 15 Years. A History of the Educational Resources Information Center* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 195 289).

[2]Note the "scope of interest" statements on the inside back cover of this publication to see the diversity of the ERIC system and to identify individual Clearinghouses' areas of expertise.

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VOCABULARY MAINTENANCE

The Vocabulary Improvement Project

After years of collecting, indexing, and disseminating educational literature, ERIC found that the thesaural constructions and terminology developed in 1966 (when the database was established) were not sufficient for the needs of the 1980s. The vocabulary, allowed to develop slowly over the years, needed some major revisions to bring it up-to-date. Many Descriptors entered in ERIC's early years had become obsolete. Others originally entered without definitions needed some clarification in order to be understood and used consistently. The hierarchical relationships needed some rearranging in order to reflect current thinking in education. As a result, in 1977 Central ERIC made a major commitment to upgrade the quality and usefulness of the controlled vocabulary by revising the *Thesaurus* totally—an unprecedented effort for an established, ongoing information system. The Vocabulary Improvement Project (VIP) was undertaken to implement this unusual and major revision. All 16 ERIC Clearinghouses, the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, and users of the ERIC system were asked to participate in the project.

The project was conducted in two phases, labeled "Thesaurus Review" and "Production." Phase I took place between March and August 1978, during which time Clearinghouse vocabulary coordinators, users, and database searchers critically evaluated the *Thesaurus*. By August, over 60,000 Descriptor assessments had been completed, about 10,000 by non-ERIC personnel. The objectives of this phase were to verify the utility of *Thesaurus* terms, identify problems requiring action, and recommend solutions.

An interim period, September and October 1978, followed Phase I. Clearinghouse vocabulary coordinators were assigned groups of Descriptors, for which they collated and assessed Phase I evaluations. Having decided that efficient retrieval was the overriding VIP objective, the axiom "Usage determines meaning" was adopted for Phase II.

During Phase II (November 1978 through September 1979) VIP personnel wrote new Scope Notes and modified old ones, merged synonymous terms, updated terminology, and revised cross-references. Over 10,000 separate transactions were prepared over the 11-month period. All transactions were keyed into an interim "*Play Thesaurus*" (as distinguished from the "real" *Thesaurus*). Because of the absence of an electronic mail system or online revision procedures, the *Play Thesaurus* was used to coordinate across geographic distances all recommendations of the Clearinghouses and the Facility. The *Play Thesaurus* was updated 12 times during the project. All suggested adds, deletes, and changes were included in the *Play Thesaurus*, identified by originating Clearinghouse, and coded (approved/disapproved) by the Facility lexicographers. In this way, all VIP staff were informed of each action taken on specific terms. When they had objections or suggestions, they could respond in a special "Comment" field that was incorporated within the Descriptor display for inter-Clearinghouse messages.

After the distribution of the last edition of the *Play Thesaurus*, Clearinghouse vocabulary coordinators and the Facility lexicographic staff spent several weeks reviewing the final recommendations and resolving unforeseen conflicts. The working copies of the "new" *Thesaurus* were ready by March 1980 for use in ERIC indexing. The master *Thesaurus* computer tapes—as well as the *RIE* and *CIJE* resume files—were then updated to reflect the VIP changes.

By the time the VIP project was completed, extensive revisions had taken place. The 1980 *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors—Completely Revised* (the 8th edition) reflected the following: over 600 new Descriptors, over 1,000 deleted Descriptors, and over 1,400 new or modified Scope Notes. This edition of the *Thesaurus* also reflected deliberate changes in sexist terminology.

The Vocabulary Improvement Project was a massive undertaking—an unprecedented effort by a large information system to systematically evaluate its indexing authority, to cross-check it against the database, and to let usage determine meaning and outcome of each term.[3] Although such a *thorough* revision will not be repeated in the near future, ERIC remains committed to maintaining a current and accurate vocabulary.

The Vocabulary Review Group

As a result of the success of the Vocabulary Improvement Project, some of the procedures established for it have been adapted for general ERIC implementation. Three features in particular remain: a specific vocabulary coordinator from each Clearinghouse to monitor the language of its own scope area (see p. v); user participation in vocabulary review; and a regular interactive process for vocabulary maintenance.

The Clearinghouse vocabulary coordinators, the ERIC lexicographic staff, a Central ERIC representative, and members from the user community now comprise the ERIC Vocabulary Review Group. The following user groups are represented: school librarians, university librarians, practitioners, and online search facilities. The Review Group both initiates and evaluates new terminology or modifications to existing vocabulary.

The interactive nature of the evaluation process allows all points of view to be heard before decisions are made in *Thesaurus* revisions. Effective retrieval remains the objective.

ERIC continues actively to serve the educational community. Users are encouraged to submit comments on this edition and suggestions for future editions of the

[3]See Barbara Booth's "A 'New' ERIC Thesaurus, Fine-Tuned for Searching." *Online* v3 n3 July 1979 pp. 20-29.

Thesaurus to Alan Moorehead, Director, ERIC, Department of Education, Washington, DC 20208.

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL METHODS AND TOOLS

Retrieval takes two forms: manual and computer (batch or online). For manual or batch searching, ERIC provides several printed reference tools; for online searching, a computer terminal provides immediate access to the same information cumulated from those reference tools.

Manual Searching

Manual searching makes use primarily of the monthly printed versions of *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*. Users locate titles in these publications through various indexes. *RIE* provides a Subject Index (made up of Major Descriptors and Major Identifiers—see pp. xiv and xvi), an Author Index,[4] an Institution Index (showing institutions responsible for a document and/or the agency sponsoring it), and a Publication Type Index (see p. xvii). In *CIJE*, there are the Subject Index, Author Index (see footnote 4), and Journal Contents Index (indicating titles of articles listed by journal names). Semiannual or annual cumulations of both publications, including their indexes, are provided.[5]

Computer Searching

Computer searching permits a review of part or all of the ERIC database (*RIE* and *CIJE*) in a single effort, eliminating the difficulty of scanning separate monthly or even annual publications. Computerized retrieval makes possible searches, not only of Major and Minor Descriptors and Identifiers, authors, institutions, specific journals, and Publication Types, but also of words or phrases not found in any of the printed indexes. In short, computer searching gives users the option to search every word of the document resume (i.e., bibliographic information, Descriptors, Identifiers, and abstracts or annotations) as published in *RIE* and *CIJE*. It should be noted that full-text searching in ERIC refers to searching individual words of the document *resume* and not of the document itself.

An exception to this traditional guideline is ERIC's new "ERIC Digests Online" (EDO) file, made available on The Source's ED-Line in April 1986. This new database consists of approximately 200 short reports ("digests") on current issues in education prepared by all 16 of the ERIC Clearinghouses. The full text of each digest is online, and each digest can be accessed by menu, key words (Descriptors from the ERIC *Thesaurus*), or fast command. Each digest also has its own "Notespace" for user comments. The EDO file will be expanded gradually. Most of the digests in EDO are announced in *RIE* and therefore can be identified in computer searches of ERIC via DIALOG, BRS, or SDC; however, the full text of each digest is currently available online only via The Source.

> NOTE: Procedures for searching the ERIC database vary with each of the major online vendors, DIALOG, BRS, and SDC's Orbit. See p. xiii for the comparative chart, "ERIC's Searchable Fields and Vendors' Field Access Labels," or consult the vendor training materials for specific online commands.

A review of the procedures outlined in the "ERIC's Indexing" section of this Introduction (see p. xiii) is useful in determining whether manual or online searching is most appropriate. The relevant strategy then can be devised using the *Thesaurus* and possibly the *Identifier Authority List* (see p. xvi).

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[4]For documents/articles listing three or more authors, only the first author is indexed in ERIC. For collected works or proceedings containing works by three or more authors and not listing an editor or compiler of the whole, *no* authors are indexed; however, individual author names appearing in such collections are usually included within the text of the ERIC abstract/annotation and can be retrieved by full-text computer searching.

[5]*RIE*, covering education documents, is issued monthly by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. GPO also issues semiannual *RIE* indexes.

CIJE, covering education journal articles, is published monthly by The Oryx Press, 2214 North Central at Encanto, Phoenix, AZ 85004-1483. Oryx Press also publishes the following:

—*CIJE Semiannual Cumulations*
One-volume cumulations of all main entries (descriptions of journal articles) and all indexes for a 6-month period. Prior to 1979, these were published by Macmillan Information, 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

—*RIE Annual Cumulations*
Each in three volumes, two of cumulated main entries (abstracts) and one of cumulated indexes. Similar cumulations prior to 1979 were published under the title *Educational Documents Abstracts/Index* by Macmillan Information.

—*Microfiche Cumulations*
RIE Main Entry 1966–1980 and Annual Updates; *CIJE* Main Entry 1969–1980 and Annual Updates; Combined *RIE/CIJE* Subject and Fiche Index 1966–1980 and Annual Updates; Complete *RIE/CIJE* Cumulation 1966–1980 and Annual Updates.

Most *RIE* documents, identified by "ED" numbers in the ERIC database, can be ordered (microfiche or paper) from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), 3900 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304-5110. EDRS delivers monthly *RIE* microfiche sets to over 700 standing-order subscribers. Cumulated *RIE* indexes on microfiche (1966-present) by subject, author, and institution, as well as by *RIE* title, are also available from EDRS.

ERIC's Searchable Fields and Vendors' Field Access Labels*

Searchable Field	Field Label		
ERIC	**BRS**	**DIALOG II**	**SDC**
1. Descriptor—			
a. Multiword Descriptor	-hyphen	*no label necessary*	*no label necessary*
b. Descriptor Word(s)—word(s) within descriptor	.DE.	/DE	/IW
c. Single-Word Descriptor	.MJ,MN.	/DF	/IT
d. Major Subject Descriptor	.MJ.	/MAJ	*
e. Minor Subject Descriptor	.MN.	/MIN	
2. Identifier—describes subject fields with terms not found in ERIC thesaurus			
a. Multiword Identifier	.ID. *(free text)*	*no label necessary*	*no label necessary*
b. Identifier Word(s)—word(s) within identifier	.ID. *(free text)*	/ID	/IW
c. Single-Word Identifier		/IF	/IT
d. Major Subject Identifier		/MAJ	*
e. Minor Subject Identifier		/MIN	
3. Title	.TI.	/TI	/TI
4. Abstract/ Annotation	.AB.	/AB	/AB
5. Personal Author	.AU.	AU=	/AU
6. ERIC Accession Number—document number as found in RIE or CIJE	.AN.	*Type ED# or EJ#*	/AN
7. Clearinghouse Accession Number—number assigned to document by an ERIC Clearinghouse	.CH.	AN=	/CHAN
* Clearinghouse Code—two-letter prefix to Clearinghouse Accession Number	.CH.	CH=	/CC
8. Publication Year	.YR.	PY=	/SO
9. Update	.AN.	UD=	/UP

Searchable Field	Field Label		
ERIC	**BRS**	**DIALOG II**	**SDC**
10. Geographic Source of Document (field added 1979)	.GS.	CP=	/LO
11. Institution—corporate author	.IN.	CS=	/OS
12. Sponsoring Agency—funding agency	.SN.	SP=	/SPO
13. Journal Citation	.SO.	JN=	/SO
14. File Segment—RIE or CIJE (derived from ERIC Accession Number field)	.ED.AN. .EJ.AN.	/ED /EJ	RIE/FS CIJE/FS
15. Availability			
a. ERIC availability (from EDRS)		AV=	/AV
b. Alternate availability	.AV.		/AV
16. Governmental Status of Document (field added 1979)—federal, state, local	.GV.	GL=	/LO
17. Report Number	.NO.	RN=	/NU
18. Grant, Contract Number	.NO.	CN=	/NU
19. Publication Type	.PT.	DT=	/DT
20. Language of Document (field added 1979)—language of text	.LG.	LA=	/LA
21. Target Audience (field added 1984)	.ID.	TA=	/TG
22. Descriptive Note—extends description of publication, e.g., "Paper presented at Vocational Education Association National Conference"	.NT.	/NT	/NO

*Adapted from "Searchable Fields in ERIC—A Computer User's Guide via BRS, DIALOG, ORBIT," a brochure prepared by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (1986).

ERIC'S INDEXING

General Guidelines

Knowing how something is stored obviously makes finding it easier. Understanding the methods by which literature is prepared for input into a computerized database facilitates retrieval of that literature. Just as an indexer must consider the user's needs, so must the user/searcher be aware of the rules and guidelines followed during the indexing process.

ERIC's indexing aims to provide subject access to the documents and articles contained in the data-

base and announced in *RIE* and *CIJE*. To this end, two fundamental rules outweigh all others:

- Index only what is in the document.
- Index at the level of specificity of the document.

These rules mean that implied statements are not indexed, and that very general Descriptors (e.g., SCHOOLS, rather than HIGH SCHOOLS or PRIVATE SCHOOLS or MEDICAL SCHOOLS) are not used unless that subject is treated extremely broadly in the document. These two guidelines should be kept in mind by users for effective retrieval.

Indexing rules are set forth in the *ERIC Processing Manual*,[6] the system's official guide. Additional instructions, suggestions, and specific examples are detailed in the 400-page training-oriented *ERIC Abstractor/Indexer Workbook*.[7]

Major points relevant to retrieval are:

1. "Indexable" concepts, or key words, of a document are translated into Descriptors from the *Thesaurus*. Using the *Thesaurus* helps maintain consistency and avoids proliferation or scattering of concepts in the subject indexes.
2. Precoordinated (i.e., multiple-word) Descriptors are used whenever possible, rather than two or more Descriptors representing their component concepts. Thus SCIENCE CURRICULUM would be used rather than SCIENCE plus CURRICULUM.
3. Descriptors are assigned to identify subject content, educational level, age level, validation status of a program, research methodology employed, tests utilized, form or type of document, etc. (See pp. xv, xvi, xvii for lists of Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors, optional Age Level Descriptors, and Publication Types.)
4. Up to six "Major" Descriptors are assigned to a single document. They cover the main focus of the document. Major Descriptors appear in the *RIE* and *CIJE* printed Subject Indexes. In the document resume section of *RIE* and the main entry section of *CIJE*, Major Descriptors are identified by an asterisk.
5. Additional Descriptors, called "Minor" Descriptors, are also assigned to a document or journal article. They appear in the printed resumes (without an asterisk) but *do not* appear in the printed Subject Indexes of *RIE* or *CIJE*. (See examples that follow.)
6. Major Descriptors cover the main focus or *subject* of a document. Minor Descriptors indicate less important aspects within the document, as well as such nonsubject features as methodology, form, or educational level.

NOTE: Major Descriptors appear in the Subject Indexes of *RIE* and *CIJE* and therefore can be searched manually. Minor Descriptors do not appear in the Subject Indexes but are searchable by computer.

SAMPLE *RIE* ENTRY

ED 253 865 CS 007 985
Anderson, Richard C. And Others
Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading.
Illinois Univ., Urbana. Center for the Study of Reading.; National Academy of Education, Washington, D.C.
Spons Agency—National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
Pub Date—85
Contract—400-83-0057
Note—155p.
Available from—University of Illinois, Becoming a Nation of Readers, P.O. Box 2774, Station A, Champaign, IL 61820-8774 ($4.50 ea., including postage; overseas orders, add $1.00).
Pub Type—Books (010)—Reports-Descriptive (141)
EDRS Price - MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
Descriptors—Classroom Environment, Classroom Techniques, Elementary Secondary Education, *Literacy, *Literacy Education, Professional Development, *Reading Improvement, *Reading Instruction, *Reading Processes, *Reading Tests, Teacher Education, Teacher Effectiveness

Fulfilling a need for careful and thorough synthesis of an extensive body of findings on reading, this report presents leading experts' interpretations of both current knowledge of reading and the state of the art and practice of teaching reading. The introduction contains two claims: (1) the knowledge is now available to make worthwhile improvements in reading throughout the United States, and (2) if the practices seen in the classrooms of the best teachers in the best schools could be introduced everywhere, improvement in reading would be dramatic. . . .

DESCRIPTORS

SAMPLE *CIJE* ENTRY

EJ 330 620 SP 515 489
The University and the Community: Partnerships for Excellence in Teacher Education. Roth, Robert A.; And Others *Action in Teacher Education;* v7 n4 p29-34 Win 1985-86 (Reprint: UMI)
Descriptors: *Preservice Teacher Education; *Educational Cooperation; *Cooperative Programs; Higher Education; *Program Development
Identifiers: Sun Coast Area Teacher Training Program; Florida
The Sun Coast Area Teacher Training Program is an honors program at the University of South Florida which complements the teacher education program. It maintains partnerships with local school districts, organizations, and educational agencies as well as the legislature, business community, and the University of South Florida Medical School. (MT)

[6]The *ERIC Processing Manual* (1980-82 revision) is available for $40.00 from the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, 4833 Rugby Avenue, Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814. Sections relevant to retrieval, *Section 6: Abstracting/Annotating* (Sep80) and *Section 7: Indexing* (Oct80), may be purchased for $3.75 each from the ERIC Facility. The manual also appears in the ERIC Microfiche Collection (entire manual, ED 219 082; Abstracting Section, ED 219 087; Indexing Section, ED 219 088) and is available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

[7]Revised edition, 1981, in ERIC Microfiche Collection (ED 207 614) and available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

Educational/Age Level Descriptors

Since ERIC indexes educational literature from all levels—preschool through postdoctoral, infant through adult—it is important, where appropriate, to "tag" documents with "leveling" terms. These leveling terms are Descriptors from the *Thesaurus* that are included in the Descriptor Field of the *RIE* and *CIJE* resumes. They refer to either the educational level or age level of the population discussed in the document. Sometimes both educational *and* age level Descriptors may be assigned.

Assignment of at least one of the "Educational Level" Descriptors is mandatory for every document and journal article, unless it is entirely inappropriate (such as an essay on "the role of education in society"). Since a variety of *Thesaurus* terms could conceivably be used to tag these levels, ERIC has developed lists of preferred leveling Descriptors. The Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors procedure was implemented in February 1975.

This required assignment of Educational Level Descriptors has a practical implication for the searcher. For example, a computer search of the Descriptor READING SKILLS would pull out all the references in ERIC to reading skills, regardless of educational level. Adding the Descriptor SECONDARY EDUCATION would limit the output to those references dealing with grades 7 through 12; adding HIGH SCHOOLS instead would limit the output to reading skills in the upper secondary grades. Similarly, the Descriptor TWO YEAR COLLEGES would focus a search more discretely than would the term POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION. Thus the same guideline holds here in searching as in subject indexing: use the most specific Descriptor available for a specific search.

On the other hand, a document indexed at a narrow educational level would, in most instances, not also be "indexed up" to a broader level, and exhaustive searches of broader levelers require that each of their respective narrower levelers also be used. For example, one would need to search SECONDARY EDUCATION, JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS, HIGH SCHOOLS, and HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS to achieve an exhaustive search at the SECONDARY EDUCATION level.

> NOTE: Use the most specific Educational Level Descriptor possible. Use broader *and* narrower Educational Level Descriptors to retrieve at broader levels.

Age Level Descriptors were mandatory from 1980 until mid-1982, when the requirement was abolished. Eleven Age Level Descriptors still are used to index age level, however. Each covers an approximate age range, and one or more are used when a document or journal article is *concerned strictly with age-level groups or populations*. It should be noted that the use of specific other terms such as ADOPTED CHILDREN and ADULT DROPOUTS would eliminate the need also to index such generic terms as CHILDREN and ADULTS.

The Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors and the Age Level Descriptors appear with their Scope Notes in the following charts:

MANDATORY "EDUCATIONAL LEVEL" DESCRIPTORS
(Procedure Implemented February 1975)

- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
  Scope Note: Activities and/or experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children, from birth through the primary units of elementary school (grades K-3).
  - •• PRESCHOOL EDUCATION
    Scope Note: Activities and/or experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children, from birth to entrance in kindergarten (or grade 1 when kindergarten is not attended).
  - •• PRIMARY EDUCATION
    Scope Note: Education provided in kindergarten through grade 3.
- ELEMENTARY SECONDARY EDUCATION
  Scope Note: Formal education provided in kindergarten or grade 1 through grade 12.
  - •• ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
    Scope Note: Education provided in kindergarten or grade 1 through grade 6, 7, or 8.
    - ••• ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
      Scope Note: Education provided for adults at the elementary level (through grade 8), usually with emphasis on communicative, computational, and social skills.
    - ••• PRIMARY EDUCATION
      Scope Note: (See above.)
    - ••• INTERMEDIATE GRADES
      Scope Note: Includes the middle and/or upper elementary grades, but usually 4, 5, and 6.
  - •• SECONDARY EDUCATION
    Scope Note: Education provided in grade 7, 8, or 9 through grade 12.
    - ••• JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
      Scope Note: Providing formal education in grades 7, 8, and 9—less commonly 7 and 8, or 8 and 9.
    - ••• HIGH SCHOOLS (Changed from "Senior High Schools" in March 1980.)
      Scope Note: Providing formal education in grades 9 or 10 through 12.
    - ••• HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS
      Scope Note: Adult educational activities concerned with the preparation for and the taking of tests which lead to a high school equivalency certificate, e.g., General Educational Development program.
- POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
  Scope Note: All education beyond the secondary level—includes learning activities and experiences beyond the compulsory school attendance age, with the exception of adult basic education and high school equivalency programs. (Before Apr75, restricted to "education beyond grade 12 and less than the baccalaureate level.")
  - •• HIGHER EDUCATION
    Scope Note: All education beyond the secondary level leading to a formal degree.
  - •• TWO YEAR COLLEGES (Changed from "Junior Colleges" in March 1980.)
    Scope Note: Public or private postsecondary institutions providing at least 2, but less than 4, years of academic and/or occupational education.

OPTIONAL "AGE LEVEL" DESCRIPTORS

INFANTS
Scope Note: Aged birth to approximately 24 months.

YOUNG CHILDREN
Scope Note: Aged birth through approximately 8 years.

CHILDREN
Scope Note: Aged birth through approximately 12 years.

TODDLERS
Scope Note: Approximately 1-3 years of age.

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN
Scope Note: Approximately 2-5 years of age.

PREADOLESCENTS
Scope Note: Approximately 9-12 years of age.

ADOLESCENTS
Scope Note: Approximately 13-17 years of age.

YOUNG ADULTS
Scope Note: Approximately 18-30 years of age.

ADULTS
Scope Note: Approximately 18+ years of age.

MIDDLE AGED ADULTS
Scope Note: Approximately 45-64 years of age.

OLDER ADULTS
Scope Note: Approximately 65+ years of age.

The Mandatory Educational Level Descriptors are flagged within the body of the *Thesaurus* with a special instruction in the Scope Note:

SECONDARY EDUCATION
SN Education provided in grade 7, 8, or 9 through grade 12 (note: also appears in the list of mandatory educational level descriptors)

NOTE: As mandatory terms, Educational Level Descriptors always have precedence over the Age Level terms. Educational Level terms are *never* Major Descriptors unless they are the *subject* of the document.

Identifiers

"Identifiers" are key words or "indexable" concepts intended to add a depth to subject indexing that is not always possible with Descriptors alone. Identifiers are not found in the *Thesaurus*, since they are generally: (1) proper names, or (2) concepts not yet represented by approved Descriptors. In the resume sections of *RIE* and *CIJE* they appear in a separate field below the Descriptors. They may be "majored" with an asterisk just as Descriptors are. Major Identifiers, like Major Descriptors, appear in the printed Subject Indexes of *RIE* and *CIJE*.

IDENTIFIERS →

EJ 330 014 HE 520 347
Summaries of Changes in Regulations Approved by the NCAA Convention. *Chronicle of Higher Education*; v31 n19 p34-35 Jan 22 1986 (Reprint: UMI)
Descriptors: Higher Education; Intercollegiate Cooperation; *Student Financial Aid; *Student Recruitment; Group Membership; *Eligibility; Governance; *Standards; Scheduling; Personnel Policy; Competition; Drug Abuse; Screening Tests; Program Administration; Athletic Coaches; *College Athletics
Identifiers: *National Collegiate Athletic Association; Amateurism
The National Collegiate Athletic Association's regulation changes concerning student financial aid, program administration, recruiting, association membership, eligibility, association governance, coach employment policy, playing and practice seasons, and amateurism are summarized. (MSE)

Identifiers are used to index geographic locations, personal names, test or program names, specific legislation, etc., as well as concepts not found in the *Thesaurus*. In the latter case, the Identifier Field provides a "tryout" for candidate Descriptors. Identifiers are examined regularly for their suitability as Descriptors. Since ERIC is a literature-based information system, every Descriptor must be supported by a document or article in the database; Identifiers often provide that evidence and serve as the justification for Clearinghouse proposals for new *Thesaurus* terms.

Recent examples of former Identifiers that now appear in the *Thesaurus* as Descriptors are COMPUTER NETWORKS, CONFLICT OF INTEREST, FACULTY PUBLISHING, BEHAVIORISM, ACCESS TO INFORMATION, CORPORATE EDUCATION, ANGER, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY, and COGNITIVE DISSONANCE. New Descriptors are announced in the monthly issues of *RIE* and *CIJE*. Identifiers that are proper names (person, place, program, organization, etc.) rarely become Descriptors.

As of mid-1980, all terms in the Identifier Field must conform in format to terms in the *ERIC Identifier Authority List* [8] *(IAL)* or to the rules and guidelines for creating new Identifiers.[9] Items are purged from the *IAL* as they are upgraded to Descriptor status and shifted to the *Thesaurus*.

As Identifiers are elevated to the *Thesaurus*, their index postings are transferred to the Descriptor field. All such Identifier-to-Descriptor conversions occurring before December 1980 are fully reflected in the ERIC file. December 1980 was the last time a general reload of the ERIC backfile was performed. Conversions since that time, therefore, are *not* fully reflected in the database, and posting counts for Descriptors added after December 1980 may represent combined Descriptor/Identifier usages. (See related discussion under "Transferred Descriptors," p. viii.)

[8]The *IAL* is available for purchase from the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility. *Alphabetical Display* ($20.00, approx. 300 pp.); *Category Display* ($20.00, approx. 200 pp.). The main *Alphabetical Display* lists all approved Identifiers in the ERIC files, alphabetically A to Z, together with postings data for each; some cross-references and Scope Notes are provided. The *Category Display* serves as a companion volume to the main display, listing Identifiers alphabetically within 20 broad categories (e.g., Geographic Locations, Project/Programs, Tests/Testing).

[9]Guidelines are detailed in the *ERIC Processing Manual, Section 8: Vocabulary Development and Maintenance (Part 2)—Identifiers* (Apr81), available for $3.75 from the ERIC Facility or as ED 219 090 from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

NOTE:

1. Like Major Descriptors, Major Identifiers appear in the Subject Indexes of *RIE* and *CIJE*.
2. Major and Minor Identifiers can be searched online similarly to the way Descriptors can. See "ERIC's Searchable Fields" on p. xiii for variations among vendors.
3. To be safe, searches of Descriptors with add dates after December 1980 (when the last general ERIC reload occurred) should consider usages (postings) not only in the Descriptor field, but in the Identifier field as well.

Publication Types

PUBTYPE Codes

All documents are categorized by their "form" of publication (i.e., Publication Type or PUBTYPE) as well as by their subject. A special section of the document resume identifies the PUBTYPE by means of a three-digit code. PUBTYPEs are assigned to *every* document and journal article (beginning September 1974 for *RIE*, August 1979 for *CIJE*). They appear in the monthly printed issues of *RIE* along with the bibliographic information.

PUBTYPE →

ED 265 521 CS 008 298
All Our Kids Can Learn to Read: Guide to Parent and Citizen Action, Chicago SCHOOLWATCH.
Designs for Change, Chicago, Ill.
Pub Date—85
Note—178p.
Available from—Designs for Change, 220 South State St., Suite 1616, Chicago, IL 60604 ($3.50, including postage).
Pub Type—Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS Price - MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
Descriptors—Community Involvement, *Educational Improvement, *Evaluation Criteria, *Parent Participation, Reading Achievement, *Reading Improvement, *Reading Instruction, Reading Skills, *School Community Programs, School Organization, Test Interpretation
Identifiers—Illinois (Chicago), Schoolwatch IL
Intended for parents and all citizens concerned about improving Chicago's 592 public schools, this handbook explains how important reading is to a decent education and future. . . .

Printed issues of *CIJE* do not include PUBTYPE designations. However, all assigned PUBTYPEs for both *RIE* and *CIJE* are on the ERIC tapes and are searchable by computer.

In *RIE*, they are also searchable manually in the Publication Type Index (first published in July 1979). This index is organized numerically by PUBTYPE code and provides reference to title and accession (ED) number for each document having that code:

PUBTYPE INDEX →

(055) Guides - Non-Classroom

All Our Kids Can Learn to Read: Guide to Parent and Citizen Action, Chicago SCHOOLWATCH.
ED 265 521

Alternative Education Programs for Disruptive Students.
ED 265 655

Asbestos in Our Schools. Taming the Silent Killer. A Handbook for Association Leaders Produced by NEA.
ED 265 665

Codes and category names for the 36 PUBTYPES are:

CODE	PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT TYPES
010	BOOKS
	COLLECTED WORKS
020	—General
021	—Conference Proceedings (See also 150)
022	—Serials
030	CREATIVE WORKS (Literature, Drama, Fine Arts)
	DISSERTATIONS/THESES
040	—Undetermined
041	—Doctoral Dissertations
042	—Masters Theses
043	—Practicum Papers
	GUIDES
050	—General
	—Classroom Use
051	—For *Learner* (Instructional Materials)
052	—For *Teacher* (Teaching Guides)
055	—Non-Classroom Use (For *Administrative and Support Staff, Teachers, Parents, Clergy, Researchers*)
060	HISTORICAL MATERIALS
070	INFORMATION ANALYSES (Literature Reviews, State-of-the-Art Papers)
071	—ERIC Information Analysis Products
080	JOURNAL ARTICLES
090	LEGAL/LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY MATERIALS
100	AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS/NON-PRINT MATERIALS
**101	—Computer Programs
110	STATISTICAL DATA (Numerical/Quantitative)
120	VIEWPOINTS (Opinion Papers, Position Papers, Essays, etc.)
	REFERENCE MATERIALS
130	—General
131	—Bibliographies
132	—Directories/Catalogs
133	—Geographic Materials
134	—Vocabularies/Classifications/Dictionaries/ Glossaries
	REPORTS
140	—General
141	—Descriptive (Program/Project Descriptions)
142	—Evaluative/Feasibility
143	—Research/Technical
150	SPEECHES, CONFERENCE PAPERS (Individual) (See also 021)
160	TESTS, EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS
170	TRANSLATIONS
*171	—Multilingual/Bilingual Materials
999	OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS (Not Classifiable Elsewhere) (Avoid use of this category, if at all possible)

*Added April 1983
**Added July 1984

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GUIDE FOR ASSIGNING PUBTYPE CODES (A CROSS-REFERENCE FROM SPECIFIC KINDS OF DOCUMENTS TO MOST APPLICABLE PUBLICATION TYPE CODE)

(Bracketed terms are not Descriptors)

PUBLICATION TYPE	PUBTYPE CODE MOST APPLICABLE
Abstracts	131
Administrator Guides	055
Annotated Bibliographies	131
Annual Reports	141
Answer Keys	180
Answer Sheets	180
Anthologies	020
[Archival Documents]	060
Atlases	133
Audiodisks	100
Audiotape Recordings	100
*Audiovisual Aids	100
Autobiographies	060
*Bibliographies	131
[Bilingual Materials]	171
Biographical Inventories	060 (132)
Biographies	060
[Booklists]	131
*Books	010
Book Reviews	070
Bulletins	022
[Bylaws]	090
Cartoons	100 (030)
Case Records (or Case Studies	141 or 143 or 140
Catalogs	132
Charts	100
Check Lists	130 or 180
[Childrens Books]	010 and 030
Childrens Literature	030 (010)
Chronicles	060 (020)
Citation Indexes	131
[Class Newspapers]	022
[Classroom Games]	051 (100)
[Classroom Materials]	051 or 052
Codes of Ethics	090
Comics (Publications)	030
Computer Output Microfilm	100
*Computer Software	101
Computer Software Reviews	142 or 070
[Concordances]	134
*Conference Papers	150
*Conference Proceedings	021
[Conference Summaries]	021
Contracts	090
Course Descriptions	052 or 050 or 051
[Courtroom Transcripts]	090
[Creative Works]	030
Curriculum Guides	052 or 050 or 051
[Data Sheets]	110 or 130
Diagrams	100
Diaries	120 (060 or 030)
*Dictionaries	134
[Dictionary Catalogs]	131
*Directories	132
[Discipline Codes]	090
Discographies	131
*Doctoral Dissertations	041
Documentaries	100 (141)
Drama	030
Editorials	120
Encyclopedias	130
[ERIC IAPs]	071
Essays	120 or 030
[Evaluation Studies]	142
Facility Guidelines	055
Faculty Handbooks	055
Feasibility Studies	142

PUBLICATION TYPE	PUBTYPE CODE MOST APPLICABLE
Filmographies	131
Films	100
Filmstrips	100
Flow Charts	100
Foreign Language Books	010 (170)
Foreign Language Films	100 (170)
Foreign Language Periodicals	022 (170)
Games	999 or 051
Glossaries	134
Graphs	100
Guidelines	050 or 052 or 055
*Guides	050 or 051 or 052 or 055
Hearings	090
[Historical Reviews]	060
Illustrations	100
Indexes	130 or 131
[Information Analyses]	070 or 071
Instructional Materials	051
Interviews	120 or 160
Item Banks	180
[Journal Articles]	080
[Journals]	022
[Judicial Materials]	090
Kinescope Recordings	100
Laboratory Manuals	051
[Language Guides]	051 or 030 (170)
Large Type Materials	051
Leaders Guides	052
[Lecture]	150 (051)
[Legal Analysis]	090
Legislation	090
Lesson Plans	052
Letters (Correspondence)	030
[Literature Guides]	131
Literature Reviews	131 (070)
[Lobbying Papers]	090 and 120
Magnetic Tape Cassettes	100
Magnetic Tapes	100
[Manuals]	050 or 051 or 052 or 055
Maps	133
Master Plans	090
[Master Tapes (Audio)]	100
*Masters Theses	042
Matrices	100
Microforms	100
Models	100 or 143
*Multilingual Materials	171
[Musical Materials]	030
Negotiation Agreements	090
Newsletters	022
Newspapers	022
Nonprint Media	100
Opinions	120
[Oral History Transcripts]	060
Pamphlets	Document Dependent
[Parent Guides]	055
Patents	090
Periodicals	022
Permuted Indexes	130 or 131

PUBLICATION TYPE	PUBTYPE CODE MOST APPLICABLE
[Phonograph Records]	100
Photographs	100
Poetry	030
Position Papers	120
*Practicum Papers	043
Program Descriptions	141
Program Evaluation	142
Program Guides	141
Program Proposals	141
[Programed Texts]	010 and 051
Puzzles	999
Questionnaires	160
Rating Scales	160
[Recommendations]	120
Records (Forms)	100 or 110 or 050 group
*Reference Materials	130 (010)
[Regulations]	090
*Reports	140
[Research Methodology Guides]	055
Research Proposals	143
*Research Reports	143
[Research Reviews (Publications)]	070
Resource Materials	050 or 051 or 052 or 055
Scholarly Journals	022
School Newspapers	022
School Publications	Document Dependent
Scripts	030
*Serials	022
Short Stories	030
Slides	100
Specifications	090
*Speeches	150
Standards	090
State of the Art Reviews	070
*Statistical Data	110
Student Publications	Document Dependent
Study Guides	051
Surveys	160 or 143
Tables (Data)	110
Talking Books	100
Tape Recordings	100
[Taxonomy]	134
Teaching Guides	052
[Technical Reports]	143
Test Reviews	142
*Tests	160
Textbooks	010 and 051
Thesauri	134
*Theses	040
[Transcripts (Interviews)]	120
[Transcripts (Legal)]	090
[Transcripts (Oral History)]	060
Videodisks	100
Videotape Recordings	100
Vocabularies	134
Word Lists	134
Workbooks	051
Worksheets	051
Yearbooks	141 (022)

FOOTNOTES: 1 All terms not in brackets have been selected from the ERIC *Thesaurus*

2 Conventions A or B = one or the other category is appropriate, depending on item
A and B = two categories are appropriate
A (B) = a second category might be appropriate, depending on item
* = category and term are synonymous. Term should be used in descriptor field only when it denotes subject matter

3 These terms, like all other Descriptors identifying the form or type of a document, should be used as major Descriptors only when they represent the subject of the document in hand.

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To determine the proper PUBTYPE code for a document, an ERIC indexer examines the item and then checks the "Descriptor-to-Publication Type Table" (see p. xviii). For example, if the document in hand is a feasibility study, the table readily identifies it as a "code 142" item.

Similarly, this cross-reference chart is useful in the retrieval process. For example, if a user wanted samples of facility guidelines, the PUBTYPE code 055 could be searched; or an examination of the PUBTYPE code 060 could be used to help find autobiographies.

> NOTE: To allow flexibility in classification, up to three PUBTYPE code assignments are permitted for a single document or article. All may be searched online. All cataloged for *RIE* appear in the Publication Type Index of that journal.

Publication Type Descriptors

Labeling of publication type or document characteristics is also done by the use of Descriptors. For example, a document that includes the complete survey instrument (e.g., a questionnaire) used in a research study would be PUBTYPE-coded 143 (Research/Technical Reports) and 160 (Tests, Evaluation Instruments). But it would also carry the Minor Descriptor QUESTIONNAIRES (Minor, because "questionnaire" is not the *subject* of the document). The use of specific form terms is not unusual in the Descriptor Field. However, as of March 1980, certain very broad form terms that coincide exactly with names of PUBTYPE Categories are *not* used for indexing document form in the Descriptor Field. These 22 form terms and their corresponding PUBTYPE codes are:

DESCRIPTORS CORRESPONDING TO PUBLICATION TYPE CATEGORIES

DESCRIPTOR	PUBTYPE CODE
AUDIOVISUAL AIDS	100
BIBLIOGRAPHIES	131
BOOKS	010
COMPUTER SOFTWARE	101
CONFERENCE PAPERS	150
CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS	021
DICTIONARIES	134
DIRECTORIES	132
DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS	041
GUIDES	050
MASTERS THESES	042
MULTILINGUAL MATERIALS	171
PRACTICUM PAPERS	043
REFERENCE MATERIALS	130
REPORTS	140
RESEARCH REPORTS	143
SERIALS	022
SPEECHES	150
STATISTICAL DATA	110
TESTS	160
THESES	040
VOCABULARY	134

These very broad terms may be used as Descriptors (Major or Minor) *if* they apply to the *subject* of the document, as noted in the *Thesaurus:*

PUBTYPE INSTRUCTION →

BIBLIOGRAPHIES *Jul. 1966*
CUE: 2470 RIE: 6892 GC: 720
SN Descriptive lists of books or other printed materials, which are written by one author, during one period, on one subject, produced by one printer and/or publisher, or located in one place (note: corresponds to pubtype code 131—do not use except as the subject of a document)
UF Booklists (1967 1980)
Literature Searches
NT Annotated Bibliographies
BT Reference Materials
RT Anthologies
Bibliographic Coupling
Books
Citations (References)
Discographies
Filmographies
Indexes
Library Catalogs
Literature Reviews
State of the Art Reviews
Union Catalogs

Thus if a document were a bibliography about how to compile bibliographies, it would have the PUBTYPE 131 (Bibliographies) and *also* the Major Descriptor BIBLIOGRAPHIES (major, because it is the subject of the document).

> NOTE: "Document type" Descriptors (see table on p. xviii) should *not be Major* Descriptors unless they are the *subject* of the document.

FURTHER HINTS FOR RELEVANT RETRIEVAL

Non-Subject Access

One usually looks for information in ERIC by subject area, using Descriptors, Identifiers, and/or free-text phrases. Publication Type offers an additional refinement of the search process. There are other elements of ERIC's cataloging that are separate from the indexing process, however, that help limit a computer search even more precisely. They include a document's language, geographic origin (country, or country and state/province), and Target Audience.[10] All three of these data elements are searchable *only* by computer. Language appears on both *RIE* and *CIJE* citations as of January 1979. Geographic origin is used only for *RIE*, effective January 1979.

[10]Further details on the Language, Geographic Origin, and Target Audience fields are given in the *ERIC Processing Manual, Section 5: Cataloging*, available for $3.75 from the ERIC Facility. An earlier version of this document (without the Target Audience description) is available as ED 219 086 from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

Target Audience

Educational documents and journal articles are sometimes written for particular audiences. ERIC currently identifies these audiences in a special "Target Audience" field. *The field is used when an author clearly specifies an intended audience; otherwise, it is left blank.*

For consistency, eleven distinct audiences have been defined by ERIC, as follows:

- Policymakers
- Researchers
- Practitioners
  - Administrators
  - Teachers
  - Counselors
  - Media Staff
  - Support Staff
- Students
- Parents
- Community

NOTE: The ERIC computer system automatically adds the generic audience "Practitioners" to records cataloged by any of the five "practitioner" sub-categories.

The Target Audience field may be used to limit a computer search more narrowly. For example, adding Target Audience-Practitioners to a search of the Descriptor DROPOUT PREVENTION would focus the search on literature on dropout prevention written specifically for practitioners.

Target Audience is an optional cataloging element. Not all documents identify an audience; some identify more than one. There are no restrictions on the number of audiences that may be cataloged as long as the above authority list is adhered to; however, if the number of practitioner groups involved is three or more (out of the five available), only the generic term "Practitioners" is cataloged.

The Target Audience field has been a fully defined cataloging element for *RIE* since January 1984, and for *CIJE* since September 1984. The terms "Practitioners" and/or "Students" have been added retrospectively to selected *RIE* citations announced during the period May 1975 through December 1983. No citations prior to May 1975 contain the Target Audience field.

Each of the major online retrieval vendors provides computer access to ERIC's Target Audience data in a different way and has a different segment of records containing Target Audience data on its file. These differences are summarized below:

DIALOG

Access:	Via the prefix "TA = ," e.g., S TA = PRACTITIONERS
File Segment:	RIE from Jan84; CIJE from Sep84. Retrospective RIE postings (May75–Dec83, "Practitioners" and "Students" only).

BRS

Access:	"Target Audience" data merged with Identifier data, e.g.: IDENTIFIERS: Great Britain, West Indians, Caribbean. TARGET AUDIENCE: Policymakers. Searching must be done with this in mind, e.g.: POLICYMAKERS.ID. AND (TARGET ADJ AUDIENCE).ID.
File Segment:	RIE from Jan84; CIJE from Sep84. Retrospective RIE postings (Nov83–Dec83, "Practitioners" and "Students" only).

SDC

Access:	Via the suffix "/TG," e.g., PRACTITIONERS/TG
File Segment:	RIE from Aug85; CIJE from Aug85.

NOTE:

1. Target Audience was added as a new data element to *RIE* in January 1984 and to *CIJE* in September 1984. There are some retrospective *RIE* postings of "Practitioners" and "Students."
2. Target Audience is not captured for all documents and journal articles, but only for those approximately 25% explicitly claiming a target audience.
3. Target Audience does not appear in the printed *RIE* and *CIJE* abstract journals.
4. Online access to Target Audience varies from one vendor to another.

CONCLUSION

This brief review of the ERIC system has been intended to make users more aware of the system as a whole, of how the educational literature is indexed for the database, and of how the *Thesaurus* fits into the overall information dissemination process.

Throughout this process, ERIC is committed to high quality performance standards while serving the entire spectrum of the educational community. Close contact and interaction with users in the field is of prime importance to ERIC. In this sense, ERIC is more than a database (or a thesaurus); it is an active network of dedicated professionals, responding to and anticipating the information needs of both the scholar and the practitioner in the broad field of education.